

**We The People**  
Program 12  
Special GCCC Program



Recently on air I asked a number of questions of Gold Coast City Council. Radio 4CRB followed through and wrote to each councillor to ensure they had a copy of the questions and the opportunity to answer them on air. Only two councillors took up the offer and only one actually came in and spoke to 4CRB's management. A very disappointing result and one may well conclude that most couldn't answer the questions satisfactorily. So it seems that a little more pressure has to be applied to get these councillors to speak to the public about what they are doing and their accountability to rate payers.

One local gentleman is so disillusioned with Gold Coast City Council he has done something about it. Phil Smith is an ordinary bloke who lives locally with his family in Robina. He stays abreast of the news, has a vegetable garden, feeds the birds and dotes on his new grandson. He does not belong to any political party and lives a peaceful life doing all the things most of us do. He is by any measure an average Australian except for one thing.....he has acted. Phil Smith is clearly fed up with the performance of Gold Coast City Council and its puerile machinations. He does not understand the bouts of arrogance and indecision or their propensity for over spending public money.

Phil got to work and reviewed in detail a recent Council tender for a new master computer system. He did this alone and at his own expense over 9 months, as he suspected something was wrong. Indeed it is and his investigation has exposed some very disturbing issues. According to Phil, the tender process was fatally flawed and a proven computer system could have been purchased for about \$15 million dollars all up. Instead the Council have chosen not the generally preferred supplier but appear to have followed the same path as Queensland Health. The end result is that the initially approved budget of \$50 million dollars slowly expanded to \$ 87 million, but wait there's more. They are apparently now looking for an additional \$70 million and one inside source has told Phil it will just keep on going with no end in sight. This is simply shameful. Phil Smith also called each councillor in turn and spoke directly on the phone to all but two. He asked them a few simple questions including seeking clarification on what this computer system is all about. No councillor had any real idea except for one who provided some minimal detail. Some answers were outrageous and included "well I think it's something to do with email and dog registrations". No its not. Consider that these councillors signed off on a budget of \$87 million and now cannot remember how much the budget currently is and they have no knowledge of what they have signed off on. How is this possible?

The end result is that Phil Smith has written to Paul Lucas the Minister for Local Government and detailed the situation along with a clear description of the problem and associated issues. He also offered to meet with people from the Minister's office and to share all his research and documentation but sadly he has not received any response at all. Under the Local Government act he has asked for the appointment of an Administrator and therefore the dismissal of the Gold Coast City Council. Section 112 and 123 of the act provides for this in the case of mismanagement, negligence or corruption. Additionally he has asked for the computer project to be halted and for a full system audit to be conducted. I salute the efforts of these local heroes who actually do something to ensure local government is held to account and act where most just complain. Remember, for evil to prevail only requires good people to do nothing. **You be the judge and until next time this is Kent Bayley.**